

UNCLAS ADANA 0396

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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY SUMMARY
NOVEMBER 19, 2002

¶1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for November 19, 2002. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICS, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

¶2. SARAY (VAN) TORTURE VICTIM RE-ARRESTED
(Evrensel) Saray (Van) torture victim Okan Yurdabak was re-arrested on November 17 after he had filed suit against torturers. Yurdabak claimed the local Jandarma commander insulted and threatened him for filing suit. Later the same day, Yurdabak was released. He earlier claimed that Saray Jandarma officials had raped him with a truncheon while in custody after being arrested following a fight over a land dispute. He reportedly applied to the Van Human Rights Association (HRA) for assistance as he was afraid he might "disappear" while in custody.

¶3. STUDENT ARRESTED FOR SPEAKING IN KURDISH
(Evrensel) A Hazro (Diyarbakir) high school student was arrested and threatened with a pistol for speaking in Kurdish at school.

¶4. CLOSURE OF STUDENT ASSOCIATION EXTENDED
(Evrensel) The Dicle University (Diyarbakir) Students Association, which had been closed for three months under Article 11/0 of the State of Emergency (OHAL) Law, was re-closed on November 18, when the earlier three-month closure ended. The closure stemmed from the association's "disrupting general security and public order, and causing acts of violence to increase."

¶5. CONTINUED PRO-OCALAN PROTESTS
(Evrensel) Hundreds of youths staged demonstrations in six Batman districts to protest implementation of isolation policies against PKK (KADEK) leader Abdullah Ocalan. The youths marched, carrying torches and Ocalan posters, and shouting pro-Ocalan slogans.

¶6. ADANA BUSINESS LEADER DISPLEASED WITH NEW CABINET
(Bolge) Adana Chamber of Industry president Umit Ozgumus criticized the new government for not appointing a minister from Adana. Ozgumus complained Adana, Turkey's sixth largest province, has been neglected.

ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

¶7. SIRNAK TEMPORARY WORKERS LAID OFF
(Evrensel) Citing budgetary reasons, the municipality of Sirnak laid off 70 temporary workers hired prior to the November 3 parliamentary elections. The Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) provincial chairman claimed the workers were employed as election graft and were told to vote for the Motherland Party (ANAP). According to the chairman, the workers were dismissed after the elections when ANAP failed to pass the 10% election threshold to enter the parliament.

HOLTZ